

THE WHITE SHEEP

By Hal E. Roach

A long time ago when the Middle West was just an infant in arms, there was a town that couldn't quite make up its mind whether it wanted to be in Kansas or Missouri, so it compromised by straddling the state line. This town was called Tylerville. There were two reasons for this, - first because it had to be called something; second because "Fighting" Nelse Tyler, a mountainous blacksmith had laid it out in 1864 and had been laying it over ever since, with the help of his two husky sons, Milt and Mose. In other words, the "Fighting Tylers" bossed Tylerville.

Old Nelse Tyler had a third son, Tobias, but he wasn't much to brag about. Tobias was one of those things that just naturally happens to scrapping families once in a while - a non-scrapper who had inordinately proud of himself for no apparant reason. While Milt and Mose longed for the day when they would be able to lick their father, young Tobias seemed perfectly content to amble on through life in his own smart-aleck fashion, cashing in when possible on the exploits of his muscular brothers.

One day the Matthews family came to town from somewhere in Illinois. There was old man Matthews, a former judge, his wife and his pretty daughter, Patience, one of those girls who make any landscape look good. Nelse Tyler decided the Matthewses couldn't stay, but Patience argued with him and he changed his mind. Milt and Mose at once laid siege to the hand of Patience, but Patience seemed to think pretty well of Tobias, and that helped to stir things up some more.

Tylerville finally decided to throw off the yoke imposed upon it by Nelse and his sons, and made up his mind to elect a mayor. Being heartily in sympathy with this idea, Nelse took possession of the caucus and elected himself, appointing Ab Morton, the town's most useless citizen, as sheriff. This left things about as they were before and everybody was satisfied, except the citizens of Tylerville. But Nelse was riding for a fall. A couple of patriots framed him on a murder charge, the supposed murder being one Newt Randall, who spent his demise in hiding. Nelse was tried and just as the jury was bringing in a verdict of guilty, young Tobias hitched a couple of horses to the court house and pulled it over the line into Missouri, thereby nullifying the authority of the Kansas jury. The friends of law and order forthwith pulled it back, and Nelse was duly convicted and sentenced to be hanged.

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continued.

The day of the execution arrived and it looked pretty bad for Nelse. The scaffold and rope were all ready, when suddenly Tobias aided by Patience Matthews, discovered that Newt Randall wasn't so dead as he was supposed to be. They learned that he was camping out at Maple Springs. For once in his life Tobias made up his mind to do something definite. He set out for Maple Springs and there, sure enough, was Newt. Well, Tobias pitched into Newt and gave him the all-firedest licking that anyone had ever received up to that date. Then he loaded the disorganized Newt into a farm wagon and started back to Tylerville. The horses, knowing something unusual was expected of them, promptly ran away. Newt came to and tried to escape, and Tobias found himself extremely busy trying to keep the horses from going to perdition and at the same time holding on to Newt long enough to keep old Nelse from landing in the self-same place.

Tobias did it. He proved himself a "Fighting Tyler". He landed Newt in front of the gallows just as Nelse was about to be strung up. Since Newt had not been killed at all by Nelse and only partly exterminated by Tobias, there didn't seem to be any real logical reason why Nelse should be executed so he wasn't. For the first time in his life, Nelse was proud of Tobias, a feeling that Tobias had experienced for some time. Tobias won the hand of Patience, while Milt and Mose looked on in admiration for their hitherto useless brother. Tylerville went on about as usual, and everybody lived happily ever after.

THE END.

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